



Kootenai National Forest
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News Release

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Kootenai National Forest Fire Update for August 21

LIBBY, Mont. August 21, 2015 4:00 p.m. – As the demand for fire resources grows, members of the community have stepped in to sign up heavy equipment to assist with fire suppression efforts. The Kootenai National Forest currently has over 100 pieces of equipment with operators under contract across the forest. Equipment under contract includes 25 engines, 7 excavators, 16 water tenders, and 9 dozers. Another 96 pieces of equipment and operators are standing by to fill contracts as they become available.

As the fire situation on the Kootenai becomes more complex, additional agency resources have been ordered as well. By Saturday, August 22, there will be a total of three Type II Teams on the forest and one local Type III Team. Pearson's Type II Team is managing the Northeast Kootenai Complex (Barnaby, Marston, and Sunday). Hutton's Type II Team is managing the Clark Fork Complex which now includes the Napoleon Fire, Hamilton Fire, Star Gulch Fire, and Government Mountain Fire in the Bull River area and the Sawtooth Fire on Troy Ranger District. The local Type III Team is still assisting with the Clark Fork Complex. The Rocky Mountain Red Type II Team will be managing the Goat Rock Complex, which includes fires in or near the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness (Klatawa, Vimy, Chippewa, Poplar Point, and Berray), beginning Saturday afternoon.

Evacuation efforts continued last night in the Bull River area due to continued fire activity. Previously, residents between mile marker 8 and mile marker 14 on Highway 56 were evacuated. The evacuation zone has now been expanded to include residences between mile marker 8 and mile marker 3 on Highway 56. The evacuation zone also includes residents along the East Fork Bull River Road and residents to the east of Highway 56 and the Bull River, north of the end of the Old Bull River Road. Residents along the Old Bull River Road received pre-evacuation notices today, and pre-evacuation notice is now in effect from the junction of Highway 56 west along Highway 200 to the six mile marker, on both sides of the highway. The Sanders County Sheriff's Office and the American Red Cross have established an emergency shelter at the Noxon High School for those people affected by the evacuation.

Following is an update on wildfire activity by district on the National Forest and state land:

Location: Trout Creek Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Number of Fires: Twelve, four of which are being referred to as the Clark Fork Complex in the Bull River Area (Napoleon, Star Gulch, Hamilton and Government Mountain), and four of which are being referred to as Goat Rock Complex (Berray, Poplar Point, Chippewa, and Vimy). The Goat Rock Complex also includes the Klatawa Fire on Libby District.

Fire Activity: Fire activity continued through the night on the Clark Fork Complex Fires in the Bull River area. Fire line construction continues and air support is also assigned as visibility allows. Heavy smoke is making it difficult for aircraft to operate.

The Lone Creek Fire is contained and the Goat Rock Complex will be under the management of the Rocky Mountain Red Type II Team on Saturday, August 22.

Location: Rexford/Fortine Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Number of Fires: There are six active fires on the district, three are being managed by Pearson's Type II Team as the Northeast Kootenai Complex (Sunday, Marston, and Barnaby), and three are being managed by the district (Tween, Pinto Point, and Ural 3).

Fire Activity: The Northeast Kootenai Complex now consists of the Sunday Fire, the Marston Fire, and the Barnaby Fire, as both the Dunn Fire and the Weigel Fire have been contained and turned over to the Department of Natural Resources for management. The Sunday Creek Fire acreage has changed from 160 acres to 57 acres after more accurate GPS work was completed. Fire fighters have been able to build solid line and get water and equipment where they need it. Fire line is being built in key areas to secure land around private property and the fire continues to be monitored and suppressed. It has grown to 3,200 acres. Ground support continues to monitor and suppress the Tween Fire, Pinto Point Fire, and Ural 3 Fire.

There is a public meeting tonight in Eureka at 7:00 p.m. in the Eureka High School Auditorium.

Location: Troy Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Number of Fires: There are three fires on the district, with management of the Sawtooth Fire transferred to Hutton's Type II Team this morning.

Fire Activity: The Tepee Mountain Fire (200 acres) had indirect line built to the road on the south side of the fire. District resources are assigned to this fire with assistance from air support when visibility allows. The Cyclone Fire is contained (18 acres).

Due to Stage II Fire Restrictions and current fire conditions; the Troy Gun Range is closed until further notice.

Location: Libby Ranger District

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service

Number of Fires: There are two fires on the district, but management of Klatawa will be transferred to the Rocky Mountain Red Type II Team on Saturday afternoon, August 22.
Fire Activity: The Midas Fire is contained and district resources are being assigned where needed on other parts of the forest.

Due to Stage II Fire Restrictions and current fire conditions; the Libby Gun Range is closed until further notice.

Location: State Office, Libby

Jurisdiction: Department of Natural Resources

Number of Fires: Four

Fire Activity: Mop-up continues on the Fisher Mountain Fire. Fire line construction is complete on the Silver Butte Fire; it continues to be monitored. The Dunn Fire and the Weigel Fire are both 100% contained and continue to be monitored.

Updates will be released as more information becomes available.

The public can go here to register for the Lincoln County emergency alert system at <http://lincolncountymt>

Kootenai Interagency Dispatch Website

<http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dc/mtkdc/INDEX.HTM>

InciWeb – Wildfire Information

<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/state/27/>

Kootenai National Forest Service

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/kootenai/>

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